Fire By Nite Interview

1988

Blaine Bartel

Blaine Bartel: Hey, welcome to Fire By Nite. My name's Blaine Bartel, and we want to welcome you Uh-Mo-Tik-Lung Village right here in Guatemala. And as you can see, this is our mission program. Someone says, "Oh man, missions, you're gonna make me feel real guilty, aren't ya?" Listen, put your guilt away and just let the Holy Spirit convict you, okay? It's gonna be a lot of fun. We have numerous guests as you can see, a lot of guests here on the program, but our **special** guest is Rich Mullins, and he's a contemporary Christian music artist who is uh, really doing some things for the Lord. And our other guest is Ron Luce, who is the director of the Teen Mania mission program. And we are here with hundreds of radical young people, with Teen Mania, that are absolutely changing this country for Jesus Christ. Thousands of people come to the Lord, so let's not go any longer. Let's get right into it. Buenos Dias.

[A skit]

[Some of "Awesome God" plays as an intro to interview.]

Blaine Bartel: We're here at the Ritz Hotel in Guatemala City, and this is our special guest right here. This is Rich Mullins. And, Rich, it's very good to have you on the program.

> Rich Mullins: Well, thank you. It's very good to be here.

BB: Rich, a lot of people don't realize, but you're also a very talented songwriter. You've written a number of songs for Amy Grant - "Sing Your Praises to the Lord" was a big hit, "Love of Another Kind," on her latest album, "Doubly Good To You"... Being a lyricist, do you really feel like today's Christian music is communicating, in word, the real message of Jesus Christ?

> RM: I think lyrically, a lot of people are saying everything that they're expected to say. It's like they say all the right "Sunday School" little things. And, and it's even, like, "right", and very "Sunday School-ish" now to say, "Gee, I'm questioning my faith. It seems like, even our music, **should** be distinct. And it just seems like a lot of people want to sound as much like the world as they can and still have a

> Christian message, which maybe that's evangelistic, but I guess because I personally have a real problem with really slick music and really slick lifestyles and people who are dressed in all the right clothes and all that - you know, being very "in" - because I think Jesus reaches to the people who are very "out."

[A clip of Rich, playing "Such a Thing as Glory," on hammered dulcimer. Guatemalan kids are captivated. Then back to interview]

BB: Okay, you've got a song, we're gonna take a look at, in video form, here. It's called, "The Other Side of The World," and I'd like you to set that up for our audience, if you would.

> RM: That was a song that I wrote. It was kind of, everything came together in the time that I got to spend in The Orient. Everything kinda came together one morning. We were gettin' ready to be in a worship service where there were gonna be Shan- and Lisu- and Lahu- and Chinese- and Northern Thai- and English-speaking people, and I just really began, all of a sudden to get a grasp of what the church was doing. And I was, I was kind of overwhelmed, and... Then, tonight seeing again, being with Christians, and seeing that there **is** power in the body of Christ when we come together, and He **does** equip us. Then you go, "Yeah, there is **hope**." And I'm very thankful to be a part of a movement of people that's being directed by God.

["The Other Side of the World" video plays in it's entirety.]

[Visit with Ron Luce]

[Some kids tell of their Fire By Nite missionary trip experiences. Free Fire By Nite brochure is promoted. The address given is not Willie George Ministries, but Fire By Nite. It is: Fire by Nite Missions Trip, P.O. Box 639, Broken Arrow, OK, 74013.]

[Mission trip video footage. Music other than Rich's plays in background.]

[Another corny skit.]

[Ron Luce speaks about "What's Hot" in Guatemala. He introduces the Fire By Nite Top Ten Countdown. - "Awesome God" plays in background, and is listed as #1; but the album cover shown is Pictures In The Sky, not Winds of Heaven, Stuff of Earth.]

[A very short portion of trip video footage is shown, and "Home" plays in the background as Blaine and Rich sit on a wall near the garbage dump.]

BB: We're here at the Guatemala city dump, and as you can see behind me, this is "home" for a lot of the people here. And we're with Rich Mullins. And Rich, you have the unique opportunity of influencing a lot of young people through your music. I want to ask you a question - do you feel like the contemporary Christian musician, as a whole, is doing their part to present a missionary vision and an impact to today's young people?

> RM: Man, I think there are a lot of people out there who are really doing their best and who are really showing the people in United States that there are needs. I think there are a lot of people representing World Vision, for example and they have a **great** program I think, for just educating people in the United States as to the needs. I think, **primarily**, the responsibility for missions still is with the **church**. But, I **do** see a lot of people who are doing a lot of good things.

BB: You know, when you look around and see the tremendous needs beyond our own borders - you know, I've **never** seen anything like this in the United States - and when you see it, you just say, "Man, there's a need." But what, what should our response be - as Christians - in the United States? I mean, what do we say to this now that we have knowledge? You know, we're accountable. What should our response be to someone that may be watching the program?

> RM: Well I think Christ... I mean, the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus is very vivid. And I think, I have a hard time understanding how people who live with so much, as we do, think that they can get by without judgment when people live like **this**. And not that we are ever going to be able to alleviate poverty, 'cause some people **choose** poverty - I mean it's their **chosen** lifestyle. But there are people right here next to us that have **not** chosen this. And if we turn our backs on them, we are turning our backs on **Christ**.

[A portion of "Verge of a Miracle plays in background with more trip footage being shown.]

> RM: Well I think first of all, I think every Christian **is** called to... I think that is the commission that was given to the church, and if you are a Christian, you are a member of the church and you are responsible to see that the world is **reached**. And I think... of course there's financial backing. You know, I think there are a lot of missionaries... There are a lot of people who are here working who are very frustrated and very lonely, and you can support them by writing letters to them, supporting them. You know [he smiles], God calls us each to give what we have of our resources and...

BB: You said something real interesting there. You said everyone is called to go and that's right. The Bible said that **all** Christians "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to

every creature. Would you go as far to say that if you know, if God hasn't said "no," we **should** be going?

> RM: I know some people who I really respect who **do** say that. I think that we have to see that as the body of Christ is **going**, which means that there are gonna be people here in Guatemala. There are going to be people in Korea. I think there are going to be people in the United States.

["How Can I Keep Myself From Singing" begins playing.]

> RM: I guess the United States is a mission field. I guess we're not as Christian as sometimes we think we are, maybe.

["How Can I Keep Myself From Singing" video in its entirety.]

[Another corny skit.]

[Mission group at Guatemala International Airport. Rich is not in this scene. A CCM song sung by a male with a mellow voice (maybe titled, "Who Will Reach the Children/Lord Send Me"), plays while scenes from the trip are being shown. The song begins, "Go into the world and preach the Gospel, Signs will follow those who believe, Power and faith released to willing vessels...)]

[Corny skits/video footage/missions and Teen Mania promotions]

[Mission Aviation Fellowship video, "Kingdom of Love" by Scott Wesley Brown, The Sparrow Corp. Maybe Scott is who was singing the other song.]

BB: Hey, we're downtown here in Guatemala City. We hope you've really got a vision for what God wants to do in reaching the world through missions. We want to thank numerous people. First of all, Rich Mullins, for being our special guest. We really enjoyed working with him. And **especially** Ron Luce and Teen Mania missions, and all of these incredible young people. Did you guys have a good time? How many would like to come back next summer? [Crowd cheers] All right! God bless you. We'll see you next program. Hallelujah!

[Ends with kids' testimonies and Rich singing "The Other Side of the World."]

Executive producers: Willie George & Blaine Bartel
Produced and directed by Steven Yake
Associate producer: Chris Theis
Engineering: Keith Richardson

Written by: Blaine Bartel, Chris Theis, Steven Yake, John & Vicki Jo Witty
Production Assistants: Steve Becker, Kelly Ward, Chris Theis, Thom Casey, Lynn Richardson
Original Music Score: Brett Teegarden, c.1988 Gospel Bill Music BMI
Rich Mullins Music Videos produced by Fire By Nite, music courtesy Reunion Records; Scott Wesley Brown music video courtesy Sparrow Records.

Transcribed by Robin and Kelsie Woodson

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